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DECEMBER MEETING, 1871.

A stated meeting was held on Thursday, 14th instant, at 11 o'clock, A.M.; the President in the chair.

The records of the preceding meeting were read.

The Librarian read his usual monthly list of donors to the library.

The President spoke of some distinguished strangers who had visited the Society's rooms during the month. Among these was the Rev. J. S. Howson, Dean of Chester, author, in connection with W. J. Conybeare, of the *Life of St. Paul*, and editor of the *Epistles of St. Paul*. Also, on the 12th instant, the Grand Duke Alexis, and some gentlemen of his party; namely, Mr. Catacazy, the Russian Minister to the United States, Admiral Possiet, and Mr. Machin. Admiral Possiet presented to the cabinet several oak-leaves, accompanied by a memorandum in the Russian language, of which the following is a translation:—

“The enclosed (grew) from the acorn* taken from the oak which overshadows the tomb of the immortal Washington, and presented as a token of high esteem by Americans to H. I. M., the Emperor of Russia.”

The President called attention to a china punch-bowl on the table, a gift to the Society from Mrs. Benjamin Edes of Baltimore, presented through Dr. John Stearns, formerly of this city. It once belonged to Mr. Benjamin Edes, of Boston, at whose house on the afternoon of the 16th of December, 1773, punch was drunk from it by a number of citizens, who thence proceeded to Griffin's Wharf, and, being joined by others, from three ships which lay there, threw overboard *three hundred and forty-two chests of tea* into Boston harbor.

An original letter of Mr. Peter Edes, a son of Mr. Benjamin Edes, last-named, dated Bangor, Feb. 16, 1836, and addressed to his grandson, Mr. Benjamin C. Edes, of Baltimore, was presented at the same time. Some extracts from the letter are here given:—

MY DEAR GRANDSON,—Yours of the 6th of February I received on the 13th. You request of me a particular account of the “tea-

* It is understood that this acorn was presented to the Emperor of Russia by our late associate, George Sumner. The circumstance was a subject of notice at the time in the public papers.—EDS.

party," so called. I know but little about it, as I was not admitted into their presence, for fear, I suppose, of their being known; but what little I know I give you, so far as I can remember. I recollect perfectly well that in the afternoon preceding the evening of the destruction of the tea, a number of gentlemen met in the parlor of my father's house, — how many I cannot say. As I said before, I was not admitted into their presence: my station was in another room to make punch for them in the bowl which is now in your possession, and which I filled several times. They remained in the house till dark, I suppose to disguise themselves like Indians, when they left the house and proceeded to the wharves where the vessels lay. Before they reached there, they were joined by hundreds. After they left the room, I went into it; but my father was not there. I therefore thought I would take a walk to the wharves, as a spectator, where was collected, I may say, as many as two thousand persons. The Indians worked smartly. Some were in the hold immediately after the hatches were broken open, fixing the ropes to the tea-chests; others were hauling up the chests; and others stood ready with their hatchets to cut off the bindings of the chests and cast them overboard. I remained on the wharf till I was tired, and fearing some disturbance might occur went home, leaving the Indians working like good industrious fellows. This is all I know about it.

The bowl that I left in your mother's possession I present to you most cheerfully, hoping it will never go out of the family. If my father had been like some other men, he might have been worth thousands on thousands of dollars; but he preferred the liberties of his country to all. He once told me that we (his children) might be under no concern, for he should be able to leave us all ten thousand dollars apiece; * but by placing, like many others, too much confidence in the stability of the continental money, he died a poor man. Shame on such conduct! If my father had fallen into the hands of the British, I have but little doubt they would have hung him for a rebel, or sent him to England to be tried; but he made his escape by disguising himself as a fisherman, and getting on board a fishing-boat; and when they were a few miles from town he was landed on one of the islands, from which he made his escape to the mainland. . . .

It is a little surprising that the names of the tea-party were never made public: my father, I believe, was the only person who had a list of them, and he always kept it locked up in his desk while living. After his death Mr. Benj^d Austin called upon my mother, and told her there was in his possession when living some very important papers belonging to the *Whig Party*, which he wished not to be publicly known, and asked her to let him have the keys of the desk to examine it, which she delivered to him: he then examined it, and took out several papers, among which it was supposed he took away the list of the names of the *Tea Party*, and they have not been known since.

I have been interrupted at least half a dozen times since I began

* Benjamin Edes had then six children living. — Eds.

writing; and it is so cold, and my hand trembles so much, that you will excuse all errors and bad writing. I am obliged to quit writing any more, after wishing you a long life, health, prosperity, and happiness.

Your affectionate grandfather,

PETER EDES.

(Addressed) Mr. BENJAMIN C. EDES, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.
[Indorsed] MY GRANDFATHER, BANGOR, MAINE, 16 Feb'y, 1836.

Mr. FROTHINGHAM exhibited some original MS. journals belonging to Mr. Harry H. Edes, of Charlestown, and read a letter from him giving an account of members of the family, and of some of the ancient houses in Boston occupied by them, and other historical information: —

CHARLESTOWN, Dec. 13, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR, — Herewith I send the manuscripts which I promised to place in your hands for the inspection of your associates in the Historical Society, at the December meeting, when the punch-bowl used by the Boston tea-party, and the highly interesting and valuable letter of Peter Edes that accompanies it, are to be offered for the Society's acceptance. They consist of three journals, or diaries, a brief account of whose authors may not be uninteresting.

Peter Edes, the author of the letter just mentioned, was seized by the British on the charge of "having fire-arms concealed in his house," on the Monday succeeding the Battle of Bunker Hill, which he witnessed during the afternoon of Saturday, June 17, 1775, from Copp's Hill, in Boston, where his ill-restrained joy at beholding the havoc made in the advancing columns of the King's forces, as they approached the redoubt, drew upon him the attention and wrath of such of the invaders as were spectators with himself. He was confined one hundred and seven days in the jail, which stood, as nearly as my investigations determine me, on the site of the present court-house in Court Street, then known as Queen Street. During his imprisonment, he noted from time to time the names of those who were incarcerated with him, for what offence each was apprehended, the treatment they received, and last, but not the least interesting item, a list of prisoners taken by the British at the Battle of Bunker Hill. This much-prized heirloom is the *first*, and, in connection with the bowl, the most interesting of the three journals.

The second was penned by John Leach, whom Gage caused to be arrested June 29, 1775, on "suspicion of taking plans."* He was committed to the same room where Mr. Edes was confined; and they had, for their companions, the celebrated "Master" James Lovell, John Hunt, and William Starr. Mr. Leach, who was my great-great-grandfather, on the *maternal* side, was born in London in 1724; and, having

* Several drawings of the position of the army at a later period of the war, and plans of real estate in Boston surveyed by him, which he made, are now in my possession.

made three voyages round the world, came to Boston in 1749 or 1750. On the twenty-fourth of July 1750 he married Sarah Coffin, a cousin of the late Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin, Baronet, afterwards of the British navy. He was by profession a civil engineer, and at one time kept a navigation school in Fore Street, now Ann Street. His residence adjoined the homestead of the late Isaac Harris, in North Bennet Street, where he was living at the time of his arrest. In this house he resided for forty years, and there died June 10, 1799, at the age of seventy-five. An obituary notice appeared in the "Columbian Centinel." The British soldiery were quartered in a house nearly opposite, on the corner of that part of Love Lane known as Short Street; and he had the "Red Coats" for *next door* neighbors as well, — Colonel Proctor having taken possession of the house lately occupied by Mr. Harris, for sheltering another detachment of the British forces. I take pleasure in presenting to the Historical Society a photographic view of the Leach and Harris houses, taken for me by our Boston artist, Mr. Whipple. The view includes another house that is historic. At the end of North Bennet Street you observe a large brick house standing on the street running at right angles with it. This house forms the southerly corner of Salem and Sheafe Streets, and during the Revolutionary war was occupied by Robert Newman, by birth or parentage an Englishman, who espoused the cause of the colonies at the breaking out of the struggle for independence. He it was who hung the lanterns in the tower of the old North Church on the night of the eighteenth "of April in seventy-five" as a signal to Paul Revere, whose memorable ride has been made familiar to every child by the beautiful poem of Professor Longfellow. This fact was communicated to me quite recently by one of Mr. Newman's lineal descendants residing in Boston.

Is it not remarkable that these two *revolutionary* journals, kept in the same room, and whose authors frequently refer each to the other in their record, should, after a separation of ninety years, again stand side by side on the shelves of my library?

The third diary is also from Mr. Leach's pen, but at a much earlier period. Commencing with an entry on July 3, 1757, and closing with another on Nov. 5, 1758, it notes many public events that occurred during the expedition against Louisburg, and also the death of Prince, the Annalist. This document is of more private than public interest, and is only sent because I was sending its companion.*

In all the accounts of the destruction of the tea that I have seen, it is stated (when stated at all) that the tea-party were disguised in a

* The two revolutionary journals have been printed. Mr. Edes's appeared at Bangor, Me., in 1837, in a small octavo pamphlet of twenty-four pages, of which I have never seen but a single copy besides my own; and Mr. Leach's, in the New-England Historical and Genealogical Register for 1865. As the Edes pamphlet is almost unknown, it is my intention to reprint it with the Leach journal in a limited edition for private distribution, when I can find leisure to annotate them as I desire and prepare biographical sketches of their authors. The third journal — that of Mr. Leach, embracing the period from July, 1757, to November, 1758 — has never been printed nor abstracted, and such passages as are of public interest may find a place in the proposed volume.

room back of Edes & Gill's printing-office, then located on the westerly corner of Queen Street and Dassett's Alley.* The site is on the northerly side of Court Street, directly opposite the court-house, and forms the westerly corner of Franklin Avenue, which separates it from the "Boston Daily Advertiser" building on the easterly corner. Thomas, in his *History of Printing*, in speaking of this site remarks: "Samuel Kneeland began business about the year 1718. His printing-house was in Prison Lane (now Court Street), the corner of Dorset's Alley. The building was occupied for eighty years as a printing-house by Kneeland and those who succeeded him; but it is now [1810] filled with offices occupied by gentlemen of the law." He also tells us that Edes and Gill occupied the premises after the decease of Kneeland, which occurred Dec. 14, 1769, and there continued to publish the "Gazette" until April, 1775, when the war broke out. (Vol. i. pp. 302-306; ii. p. 242.)

From the letter accompanying the punch-bowl, however, it would appear that the party disguised themselves in Benjamin Edes's *parlor*.† This naturally leads us to inquire, "Where did Benjamin Edes reside?" In the journal of his son occurs this paragraph:—

"1775, June 19. About eight o'clock in the morning, being in Edes & Gill's office, three men belonging to the ships-of-war appeared round the office; and, having been previously informed of their pressing every person into the service who happened to fall in their way, I ran out of a back door *which conducted into the lane* that led to my father's house. Thither I repaired," &c.

Thomas, in his *History of Printing*, speaks of Benjamin Edes's residence as "a good house in Cornhill, *part of which formed the alley leading to Brattle Street*: it was next to that formerly owned [and occupied] by John Draper," publisher of the "Evening Post." The "lane" mentioned in the diary was, as we have seen, Dassett's Alley (now Franklin Avenue), which led from Queen Street to Brattle Street; and the "alley," of which the house formed a part, was unquestionably Boylston Alley, now the covered passage-way extending from Brattle Street to Washington Street, *then called* Cornhill,—the present thoroughfare known as Cornhill not having been laid out till 1817. From which it appears that the house stood on a part of the site now occupied by the printing establishment of Rand, Avery, and Frye, in the *present* Cornhill, opposite Washington Street.

Benjamin Edes, senior, was always to be found associated with the

* See Frothingham's *Life of Joseph Warren*, p. 280; Wells's *Life of Samuel Adams*, vol. ii. p. 124.

† Observe that, in the letter of Peter Edes, he expressly states that he was *not admitted* to their presence; and, further, that he only "*supposes*" that their object in remaining in the house till dark was to disguise themselves. I incline to the opinion that the scheme of destroying the tea was matured at the house, that the party then proceeded to the printing-office and donned their Indian garb, and thence sallied forth to the wharves. In fact, since writing the above, I find the following paragraph in a letter written to me in 1866 by Peter Edes's daughter, Mrs. Sargent, of Bangor. She says, speaking of the printing-office, "Father often spoke about the time the men met there and disguised themselves before going to the wharf to throw the tea overboard." This seems to be conclusive.

leading spirits of the Revolution, in all measures taken by the Bostonians against the oppressive acts of Parliament, and those sent hither to enforce them. He was born in Charlestown, Oct. 14, 1732, the second son of Peter* and Esther (Hall) Edes of that place. While yet a young man he removed to Boston, where he married Martha Starr, and in 1755 associated himself with John Gill in the publication of the "Boston Gazette," of which he was for forty-three years editor. Gill was also a Charlestown boy, and a brother of the Hon. Moses Gill, afterwards lieutenant-governor of this Commonwealth. Thomas has given a good account of Mr. Edes's career as a printer in the History of Printing, where his sons, Benjamin and Peter, who were for a time in business with their father, also find mention. He died in Boston, Dec. 11, 1803, aged seventy-one years. An obituary notice of him appeared in the columns of the "Independent Chronicle" on the 19th of the same month. Gordon, in his History of the American Revolution (vol. i. p. 175, London ed. 1788), mentions Benjamin Edes in his list of persons who, on the 14th of August, 1765, suspended from the branches of Liberty Tree an effigy representing Andrew Oliver, the stamp distributor, and a huge boot (typical of the Earl of Bute) with the devil emerging from it holding the Stamp Act in his hand.

Peter Edes, the second son of Benjamin Edes, was born in Boston, Dec. 17, 1756, and at the time of his arrest had not attained his nineteenth year. Dec. 5, 1781, he married Elizabeth Walker, of Bangor, who bore him a large family. Dissolving his partnership with his father, he opened an office in State Street, where he printed many books and tracts of which I have several specimens. Among the most valuable of the works that issued from his press was an edition of the Fifth-of-March Orations, accompanied by a preface over his own name. He remained in Boston till 1786 or 1787, when he removed to Newport, R.I.; † subsequently to Augusta, Me., where he published the "Kennebeck Intelligencer" in 1797; to Hallowell, where he printed one of the many funeral orations on Washington; and finally settled at Bangor, where he died March 30, 1840, at the age of eighty-three.

Benjamin Edes, the son of Peter and Elizabeth Edes, was born in Boston, April 25, 1784, and removed to Baltimore, where, besides following the calling of a printer, he held a commission from the State

* This Peter Edes, who was one of the subscribers to Prince's Annals, is noticed in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, vol. xvi. p. 16, with others of "the *literati* of New England," as Prince's subscribers were termed. He was born in Charlestown. Sept. 15, 1705, the son of John and Grace (Lawrence) Edes, and grandson of John Edes, senior, who emigrated to that town from Lawford, county of Essex, England, where he was born March 31, 1651, and baptized April 6th following.

† I find, upon investigation, that he returned to Boston about 1792, and the following year there appeared a little 12mo volume, a copy of which has recently come into my possession. Its title is "The Miscellaneous | Works | of | Dr. Goldsmith | containing all h s | Essays and Poems | Printed at Boston | by P. Edes for Thomas and Andrews | Faust's Statue, No. 45 Newbury St. | MDCCXCIII." This is the only Boston imprint of his subsequent to 1787 that I have seen, though doubtless there were many others. His daughter, Sarah Rhodes Edes, was born in Boston, May 26, 1795, and his removal to Augusta, as above stated, probably occurred between this date and July 14, 1797, when his son, Richard Walker Edes, was born in that town.

of Maryland as colonel of militia, and subsequently was made brigadier-general. He commanded a company in the gallant Twenty-seventh Regiment at the fierce engagement at North Point, on the 12th of September, 1814. And in this connection I must not forget to mention the fact of his having been the first to give to the world in enduring print our glorious national anthem, the Star-Spangled Banner, composed by Francis S. Key during the bombardment of Fort Mc Henry. Mr. Lossing, in his valuable Fieldbook of the War of 1812, pp. 956-958, gives a most interesting account of the origin, authorship, and first publication of this soul-inspiring song. Mr. Edes married in Baltimore, Oct. 25, 1809, Mary Ann Cuming, the lady who presents the bowl and letter to the Historical Society, now eighty-six years old. Their son, Benjamin Caldwell Edes, to whom the letter is addressed, was born in 1819, entered the army and died at Key West, Florida, March 30, 1844.

I regret not having been successful in ascertaining whether the list of members of the tea-party, spoken of in Mr. Edes's letter, is still extant among the papers of Benjamin Austin, whose present owner I took much pains to discover; but only to learn that the gentleman who *probably* is their possessor is now in Europe. I shall make it a point to inquire further into this matter upon his return.

In reference to the paragraph that has been going the rounds in the newspapers of late, stating that the freight on the tea had been but recently paid to parties in Nantucket, I will say a word in conclusion.

About a month since, your associate, Mr. Whitney, and I were drinking the health of Benjamin Edes in a punch brewed in this very bowl, when he inquired if I had seen the paragraph in question. I replied that I had, and would investigate the report before the punch-bowl was presented to the Historical Society. I accordingly addressed a note to a correspondent in Nantucket, and in reply received the information that the freight on the tea shipped in the "Dartmouth," which was the first of the tea-ships to arrive, was paid in full by the East India Company in London to Mr. Francis Rotch, the Quaker, to whom the vessel belonged, before that gentleman's decease in 1820. My correspondent, who is fully informed upon all matters in Nantucket of such public interest as this, writes that he knows nothing of any *recent* payment by the East India Company to any parties in that island; and, until some proof is adduced in support of the statement, I shall be inclined to doubt its truth. Mr. Sanford's letters contain many interesting items respecting Nantucket and some of the prominent men who were born and bred there. I enclose two of them for your perusal, and their contents are at your disposal.

As the interest of your associates at the meeting to-morrow will probably centre in the punch-bowl, and revive recollections of the tea-party, — being so near the anniversary of that exploit, — I thought it might add interest to the occasion, to send you, with the journals, the accompanying daguerreotype, taken from life, delineating the features of one of the few who are known to have been of the social party. The features are those of Colonel Henry Purkett, who was a connec-

tion of my family, by marriage. The Hon. James S. Loring, in the "Hundred Boston Orators," makes mention of his presence with Major Benjamin Russell, and George Robert Twelve Hewes (another of the party, who published some account of it in a little work entitled "Traits of the Tea Party"), at the delivery of Dr. Smith's Fourth-of-July Oration at South Boston in 1835.

Hoping that I have not wearied you by the length of this letter, believe me

Sincerely yours,

HARRY H. EDES.

The Hon. RICHARD FROTHINGHAM.

Remarks on the subject of this communication were made by Dr. Shurtleff, Mr. T. C. Amory, and the Rev. Dr. Ellis.

The thanks of the Society were ordered for these gifts.

The following vote was unanimously adopted :—

Voted, That the Standing Committee be empowered to authorize the Treasurer to borrow money on the credit of the Society to pay outstanding bills, and for current expenses.

A new volume of Collections, Vol. X. of the Fourth Series, being Part II. of the "Aspinwall Papers," and containing an Index of the whole series, was laid before the meeting.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Colonel Aspinwall and his associates of the committee on the new volume.

The Librarian called attention to the circumstance that the Rev. E. D. Neill, in his recent work, "The English Colonization of America," on page 307, had reprinted the absurd fictitious letter of Cotton Mather, about a scheme to capture William Penn, to which he had called the notice of the Society at the meeting in June, 1870 (see printed Proceedings under that date, pp. 328, 329).

An application from our associate, the Rev. E. E. Hale, for leave to copy some Washington letters from the Heath Collection, was granted under the rules.

The President exhibited the records of Castle Island in Boston Harbor, intrusted to him by General Benham. A memorandum of General Benham on a fly-leaf of the volume is as follows :—

The following record appears to have been commenced, and for the most part written out, between the years 1803 and 1805, by Captain (afterwards Major) Nehemiah Freeman, U.S. Army,—as I understand,—a brother of the Rev. Dr. Freeman, formerly pastor of the Stone Chapel, Boston.

H. W. B.

The following, on the same fly-leaf, is probably from the pen of Captain Freeman :—

When the command of Castle Island devolved upon the person who has collected the following record, an imperfect orderly book, kept but for a few months, contained all the information the place afforded. A few lines, in the first Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, make mention of Castle William; and some information has been derived from an octavo page, written by Mr. William Salisbury, and published in the "Massachusetts Magazine" for 1789. The principal source of intelligence has been found in the newspapers, which have obligingly been lent for perusal. This record is respectfully recommended to the care of each succeeding commanding officer, not only for preservation, but also for such additions as the events of the day may require.

JULY 1, 1803.

Ex-Governor CLIFFORD, chairman of the committee on the subject of petitioning the Legislature for authority to increase the number of members and for other purposes, reported, through Mr. Deane, that the committee "have held two meetings since the last stated meeting of the Society, and have fully considered and discussed the matters referred to them; but that they are unanimously of the opinion that it is expedient to postpone a formal Report of their conclusion until a future meeting of the Society."

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood, of New York, a Corresponding Member, being present, was invited to address the meeting: to this call Dr. Osgood briefly responded.

JANUARY MEETING, 1872.

A stated monthly meeting was held on Thursday, the 11th instant, at 11 o'clock, A.M.; the President in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read by the Recording Secretary.

The Librarian read his usual list of donors to the Society.

The President noticed the decease of Mr. Henry T. Tuckerman, of New York, a Corresponding Member, in the following language:—

Mr. Henry T. Tuckerman died in New York, after a brief illness, on the 17th of December last. Many of us knew him intimately, and valued him highly as a friend and as a scholar. He was a native of Boston, the son of a Boston merchant;